disadvantages in life mainly because most of these communities inhabit areas of the country which are remote, hilly, undulating, forested and have tow density of population.

(b) The Government is implementing a number of Central Sector/ Centrally-Sponsored Schemes for the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes. In order to put a policy framework in place to provide a level playing field for the Scheduled Tribes and to ensure their protection and development in an integrated and holistic manner, the Ministry of Tribal Affairs has formulated the draft of a National Tribal Policy to address the issues concerning lower Human Development Indicators, poor infrastructure, diminishing control over natural resources, persistent threats of eviction from their habitat, etc.

The Ministry has also introduced the Scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forest Rights) Bill, 2005 in the Lok Sabha on 13th December, 2005, to recognise and vest rights over land and forest produce in forest dwelling Scheduled Tribes who have been residing in such forests for generations but whose rights could not be recorded.

Draft Tribal Policy

†2088. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have prepared the draft of tribal policy;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) whether it has been decided to invite suggestion from public in the draft; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and if so, the steps taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has already formulated a draft of a National Tribal Policy covering all important issues that concern tribals, such as Alienation of Tribal Land; Tribal-Forest Interface; Displacement, Rehabilitation & Resettlement; Enhancement of Human Development Index; Creation of Critical Infrastructure; Violent Manifestations; Conservation & Development of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(PTGs); Adoption of Tribal Sub Plan Strategy; Empowerment; Gender Equity; Enlisting Support of Non-Governmental Organisations; Tribal Culture & Traditional Knowledge; Administration of Tribal Areas; the Regulatory & Protective Regime; Scheduling & De-scheduling of Tribes, etc. The draft policy has been made available to the members of the public through the Ministry's website and copies of the said policy have also been sent to the Central Ministers, Ministries/Departments of the Government of India, State Governments, UT Administrations, academicians, anthropologists, social activists, experts working for the Welfare of tribal people and other stakeholders for their comments and suggestions.

(d) Does not arise.

Malnutrition deaths of tribal children in Maharashtra

2089. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of TRIBAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of malnutrition deaths that have taken place especially of tribal children in the State of Maharashtra during the last one year; and

(b) the steps taken to tackle the situation?

THE MINISTER OF TRIBAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH): (a) Malnutrition is a multi-dimensional and intergenerational problem and is not a direct cause of death, but it can increase morbidity and mortality by reducing the resistance to infections. According to the report received from Government of Maharashtra for the year 2005-06, the number of malnourished children in Grade III and Grade IV were 5255 and 651 respectively, in 15 tribal districts of Maharashtra.

(b) To prevent the problem of malnutrition, the Union Government supports a number of programmes to make available additional foodgrains to needy families and to supplement nutritional deficiencies among children and pregnant women. The Government of Maharashtra runs specific programmes like Raj Mata Jijau Maternal Child Health & Nutrition Mission, Janani Suraksha Yojana and Nav Sanjtani Yojana which includes Mobile Medical Squad, Matritva Anudan Yojana, Dai Meeting Scheme, Pada Volunteer Scheme, etc. to tackle the problem.